

# BUILDERS' GUIDE

**W**HETHER you are contemplating the erection of a chicken house or a business block, a bungalow, or an apartment house, the time to build is NOW. It's the concensus of opinion among material men throughout the country that owing to economic conditions, labor unrest and the railway strike, the cost of building material both in hardware and lumber, as well as brick and cement, will not be less than at present for some time to come and that any day may see the end of the comparatively low prices, with a sharp advance in all lines. TAKE THE EXPERT ADVICE OF THE ADVERTISERS ON THIS PAGE AND BUILD NOW.

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## CONSTRUCTION GAIN SPITE OF HIGH PRICES

**Demand For Homes In All Parts of Country — Labor Scarce**

Apropos of the recent widely published statement by James A. Wetmore, supervising architect for the United States treasury department, that the next eighteen months will witness "a very material" drop in the cost of building, an inquiry indicates that his belief is exactly at variance with the opinions of experienced observers throughout the country.

Heads of families or capitalists who are postponing building in anticipation of decreased costs will be rewarded, it appears, solely with larger construction bills.

It is possible that Wetmore's wish is father to the thought, because some \$15,000,000 worth of federal construction, for which inelastic appropriations have been made, is known to have been held up pending the advent of the lower costs which he predicts, but which others, presumed to be equally well informed, cannot detect in their estimate of the future.

It is a matter of record that the cost of building has been going up for nearly a year, following the drop in prices of many materials in 1920 and 1921, after the peak had been reached and passed. More recently, wages in several building trades also have shown a tendency to increase.

It is not abnormal for building costs to gradually advance during the country's recovery from a more or less general business depression, because it is a phenomenon that has invariably occurred during the past 100 years, so the statisticians say. In fact, it is considered an unmistakable indication that prices are stabilizing themselves on a new level, with a tendency to increase rather than decline, until the present period of prosperity is fully established.

But more apparent, perhaps, to the average observer or participant in the present extraordinary building activity is the fact that the time worn axiom of supply and demand has a hand in regulating construction costs. With the country as a whole still inadequately housed the demand for building materials and labor can do nothing but increase, with costs closely following suit.

A housing shortage of big proportions cannot be overcome in 18 months, and coupled with this actuality, a shortage of labor recently has made itself apparent. Here is a summary of the building situation in 184 American cities, ranging in population from 5000 to 6,000,000: More than 130 communities reported a shortage of homes, and in 40 per cent of the total, rentals were said to be advancing. Business rents in 60 per cent of the cities investigated were found to be going up also.

Despite a tremendous volume of construction, the reports from every section of the United States indicated that practically no over-building is evident, less than one per cent of all the cities asserting that they were over-built.

About 75 per cent of the 184 places surveyed said the volume of building permits issued this year greatly exceeds the number tabulated in 1921. The market for residential property was reported good in 80 per cent of the total, with about the same proportion, as regards business realty.

A shortage of labor was announced by 22 per cent of the cities under investigation, with only 3 per cent reporting idle men.

Another nation-wide investigation of equal thoroughness made by the Associated General Contractors of America, discloses that the country's deficit in building is so pronounced that construction could continue for 10 years at 25 per cent above normal before overtaking the shortage.

Finally, if figures are sought by the prospective builder who believes here are several advances in the cost of materials in the past three months, authenticated by the department of commerce, at Washington:

Common brick, 2 per cent; hollow tile, 2 per cent; cement, 10 per cent; Douglas fir, 7 per cent; lath, 6 per cent; cedar shingles, 4 per cent; pine flooring, 10 per cent; plate glass, 12 per cent; structural steel, 25 per cent.

According to his own figures, Henry Ford makes about \$4 in just about the same length of time it takes you to read this paragraph.

To get a license to run an auto in some states you have to have experience. But in marriage you get the experience after you get the license.

## Means of Making Room Sound Proof

The University of Illinois has made a study of the problem of making partitions in houses and other structures sound-proof. In a bulletin issued by the engineering experiment station of the institution it is pointed out that certain principals of sound transmission are overlooked in most partitions that ordinarily would be effective barriers to sound.

Sound may be transmitted from one side of a partition to the other in three ways, it is stated in the bulletin. It may progress through continuous air passages, it may pass an elastic wave through the solid structure of the partition, or by setting the partition in vibration, it may originate sound waves on the further side.

The bulletin goes on to state: "A sound-proof partition should be rigid and as free from air passages as possible. For effective sound-proofing of a group of rooms, the partitions, floors and ceilings between adjacent rooms should be made continuous and rigid. Any necessary openings for pipes, ventilators, doors and windows should be placed in outside or corridor walls, where a leakage of sound will be less objectionable.

"In case the sound is generated within the building, such as the vibrations set up by a motor fastened to the floor, through the continuity of solid materials. In order to stop them it is necessary to make a break in the structure so as to interpose a new medium differing in elasticity and density. The vibrations of a motor may be minimized by placing a layer of half-inch or similar material between the supporting base and the wall.

"Special attention should be paid to the ventilation system. All effective sound-proof constructions either omit entirely a ventilation system or else construct it in some special manner to avoid transmission of sound. In some buildings air is supplied and withdrawn from the rooms by small individual pipes. This results in considerable friction between the walls of the pipes and the air, with a resultant weakening of the sound waves.

"When sound-proofing a building, all details should be considered with respect to the likelihood of the transmission of sound. Each room, as far as possible, should be made an insulated unit by means of air spaces or air-filled materials that separate it from the surrounding walls.

## Cement Sieve Is Finer Than Silk

In the art of wire weavers is found an industry about which the average person hears very little. In a way, this business corresponds to the textile industry, except for the fact that fine wire is used instead of threads of cotton, wool or silk. The more important uses for the product of the wire weavers demand the most exacting care in the weaving, for there must be exactly the same number of wires to the square inch, and the same number of holes in a given area.

The mining industry and the cement industry, are the two largest users of testing sieves and millions of dollars depend on the exactness of the tests.

In the cement industry, the specifications of the United States government and the American Society for Testing Materials demand that Portland cement be ground so fine that 75 per cent of the material will pass through a sieve having 40,000 holes to the square inch. The wire weavers are called on to weave a testing sieve meeting these requirements. It is necessary for them to spin a wire finer than a human hair. Into every square foot of testing sieve of this standard, one mile of fine wire is woven. It is a delicate operation and requires the most exacting care.

Cement testing sieves will not only hold water, but they are finer than silk. A test made at one of the sieve plants showed that a piece of silk dress lining measured 91 openings to the linear inch, a silk handkerchief 110 openings, and a piece of silk dress material of excellent quality 187 openings. They were all coarser than the wire testing sieve, which must have 200 openings to the linear inch.

When the wire weaver completes a sieve it is inspected by the United States bureau of standards and is stamped with the governmental acceptance if found correct. At cement mills hourly tests are made to assure the uniform quality of cement.

Twenty years ago we were running to see an auto instead of running to get out of the way of them.

Another thing for auto owners to worry about is that in less than two months they have to buy another license tag.



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